

NOAA Weather Radio Receivers Make Good Gifts This Holiday Season

Looking for a unique gift idea this holiday season? Consider a potentially life-saving present, a NOAA Weather Radio. Most of these receivers are capable of sounding an alarm whenever the National Weather Service issues a local severe weather or flood alert, or other hazard warning.

"A NOAA Weather Radio could save your life some day," says retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Jack Kelly, director of the National Weather Service. "When you may only have minutes to react, NOAA Weather Radio gives you confidence to take the appropriate action when severe weather or other hazards are at hand."

NOAA Weather Radio receivers are sold at many electronics stores and discount stores, through catalogs and over the Internet. Receivers come in many sizes and with a variety of functions and costs. Pocket radios can be used for outdoor activities, or carried on family trips.

Most NOAA Weather Radio receivers will sound an alarm when a hazard alert is issued, even if the receiver is not playing. Some NOAA Weather Radio receivers have a special feature called Specific Area Message Encoding, or SAME. All official watches and warnings broadcast by the NWS are preceded by unique digital audio codes that describe the type of warning and identify the county or counties being warned. People who own a SAME-capable receiver can pre-select their local codes to ensure they hear the specific warning information they need to make potentially life-saving decisions. For the deaf and hearing impaired, some SAME-capable receivers provide limited text information describing the type of warning issued. Another feature is an accessory jack which enables users to supplement an audio alarm with alternate attention-getting devices such as strobe lights or bed-shakers.

Known as the "Voice of the National Weather Service," NOAA Weather Radio is provided as a public service by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency within the Department of Commerce. The NOAA Weather Radio network broadcasts forecasts, watches, warnings, and other hazard information over more than 560 stations covering the 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories.

Kelly said NOAA Weather Radio stations reach about 85 to 90 percent of the United States population. NOAA Weather Radio receivers are capable of tuning in frequencies between 162.400 and 162.550 MHz. See our Weather Radio coverage map for the county warning area of NWS Northern Indiana. For more information, including the latest list of station locations and SAME codes for programming a SAME-capable radio, check the NOAA Weather Radio Web site – <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr>.

"Remember," said Kelly, "this is a holiday gift that could save your life or the life of someone you love."